

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MASERU 01643 181526Z

ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 INT-05 OES-07 AID-05 IGA-02 /030 W

-----083778 181705Z /43

R 180806Z OCT 77

FM AMEMBASSY MASERU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7675

INFO AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY MBABANE

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

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MBABANE FOR OSARAC

NAIROBI FOR REDSO

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAID, ENRG, LT

SUBJECT: PM DISCUSSES SOIL CONSERVATION AND FINANCING HYDRO-
ELECTRIC PROJECT

1. SUMMARY. PM LEABUA JONATHAN RECALLED HIS INTEREST IN U.S.
ASSUMING TASK OF DEVELOPING NATIONAL SOIL CONSERVATION PROGRAM.
HE ALSO SAID HE PLANS TO CREATE A NEW MINISTRY FOR WATER
RESOURCES AND ENERGY AND INTENDS TO RAISE AN INTERNATIONAL LOAN
TO BUILD A HYDROELECTRIC DAM.

2. THE PM RECALLED HIS REQUEST TO THE AMBASSADOR CONVEYED IN THEIR
FIRST MEETING IN JANUARY FOR THE U.S. TO TAKE ON THE TASK OF
DEVELOPING A NATIONAL SOIL CONSERVATION PROGRAM IN LESOTHO. THE
PM ENVISAGES THIS AS A WAY OF PRESERVING THE SOIL AND PASTURE
LAND WHILE CREATING WORK OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE UNEMPLOYED. HE SAID
HE WISHED TO EMPHASIZE THE EMPLOYMENT MECHANISM INHERENT IN THE
REQUEST HE HAD MADE FOR A SOIL CONSERVATION PROGRAM.

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PAGE 02 MASERU 01643 181526Z

3. THE PM SAID HE ALSO WISHED TO ADDRESS THE QUESTION OF WATER
CONSERVATION. HE WILL ESTABLISH A NEW MINISTRY OF WATER AFFAIRS
AND ENERGY WITHIN THE NEAR FUTURE. HE IS TROUBLED HE SAID BY THE
FACT THAT LESOTHO'S VAST WATER RESOURCES SERVE NO USEFUL PURPOSE
FOR THE COUNTRY WHILE THEY FLOW THROUGH LESOTHO INTO SOUTH AFRICA
TO THE SEA. HE SAID HE WILL SEEK TO RAISE AN INTERNATIONAL LOAN TO
HARNESS THE WATER RESOURCES OF THE COUNTRY. HE WILL GO FIRST TO

THE BRITISH, BUT HE MAY ALSO GO TO THE U.S. AND TO THE WORLD BANK FOR HELP IN BUILDING A DAM TO STORE WATER AND GENERATE ELECTRIC POWER. LESOTHO WOULD BE ABLE TO SELL ITS ABUNDANT WATER TO SOUTH AFRICA. HE NOTED HE HAD SEEN IN THE FINANCIAL GAZETTE A REPORT THAT SOUTH AFRICA IS AGAIN DISCUSSING THE QUESTION OF THE SUFFICIENCY OF ITS WATER SUPPLY. THE PM SAID HE WISHED TO RAISE THIS MATTER WITH THE U.S. AMBASSADOR EARLY ON SO THAT THE USG WILL NOT BE SURPRISED IF LESOTHO APPROACHES IT FOR A LOAN TO DEVELOP ITS WATER RESOURCES. HARNESSING THE WATER OF LESOTHO, THE PM SAID, IS ALSO IMPORTANT IN FORWARD PLANNING FOR POSSIBLE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR BASOTHO WHO MAY NO LONGER BE ACCOMMODATED IN SOUTH AFRICA'S MINES. THE PM OBSERVED THAT WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT WOULD ENHANCE THE POSSIBILITIES FOR IRRIGATED FARMING.

4. COMMENT: THE PRIME MINISTER BELIEVES SOIL EROSION IS LESOTHO'S NUMBER ONE PROBLEM AND HE HAS BEEN DEEPLY IMPRESSED BY THE SOIL CONSERVATION WORKS CARRIED OUT WITH AID HELP IN THE THABA BOSIU PILOT PROJECT OUTSIDE MASERU. HE IS NOT WEDDED TO ANY PARTICULAR FORMULA BUT HE BELIEVES THE U.S. HAS THE TECHNOLOGY AND THE CAPABILITY TO ASSIST LESOTHO TO HALT THE SOIL EROSION THAT PLAGUES MUCH OF THE COUNTRY.

THE IDEA OF BUILDING A WATER STORAGE AND HYDROELECTRIC DAM ON THE MALIBAMATSO (LITTLE ORANGE) RIVER AT OXBOW HAS BEEN DISCUSSED FOR SEVERAL YEARS. SOME STUDY OF THE PROPOSAL HAS BEEN COMPLETED BUT THE IDEA OF SOUTH AFRICAN FINANCING FOR THE SCHEME IS NO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 MASERU 01643 181526Z

LONGER ACCEPTABLE TO THIS GOVERNMENT AND, IN ANY CASE, WOULD PROBABLY NOT BE FORTHCOMING GIVEN THE DETERIORATION OF GOL/SAG RELATIONS.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 18-Oct-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
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Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
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Handling Restrictions: n/a
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